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Historical Association

The voice for history

HA Annual Conference

17 & 18 May 2019

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Chester

Using your Romans theme to develop literacy – going beyond the obvious

Sue Temple
University of Cumbria

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 @histassoc #haconf19 history.org.uk

Facts about Boudicca

Women had few rights under Roman law, so when the Iceni king died and was succeeded by his widow Boudicca (or Boadicea), the Romans did not accept it. Boadicea was publicly beaten and her two daughters raped by Roman soldiers.

Boadicea's response was to raise the biggest army Britain had ever seen, and destroy Roman settlements across Britain, including London.

Eventually though, her hordes were defeated by superior Roman skills and tactics (even though they outnumbered the Romans 20 to 1)

Boudicca took poison rather than fall into the hands of the enemy.

There is a story that Boudicca's body lies where she fell, in the place that is now Platform 10 of Kings Cross Station in London. In fact, this is the reason that Harry Potter's Hogwarts Express leaves from platform nine and three quarters. However, sadly, this is a myth. The Warrior Queen's final battle was actually in modern Warwickshire.

Boudicca – a different approach

(Use 6 images of Boudicca from various places)

Examine the differing depictions of Boudicca – make a note of any common factors in the pictures.

What factors can we not extract from the pictures?

Now, in 2/3s write a brief description of what you think Boudicca would have been like.

Compare this to the original description of her by Cassius Dio (100 years after her reign...)

In stature she was very tall, in appearance most terrifying, in the glance of her eye most fierce, and her voice was harsh; a great mass of the tawniest hair fell to her hips; around her neck was a large golden necklace, and she wore a tunic of diverse colours over which a thick mantle was fastened with a brooch. This was her invariable attire (Roman History, LXII.1-2).

Some other suggestions – label the Roman Sandal



Image: Leeds Museums and Galleries thinglink

<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/989831494383960067>

Estate Agent description of a Roman Villa

Job advert for a Roman Soldier

Instructions for building a Roman Road

Historical Fiction – based around ‘The Sandal’ by Tony Bradman

Boudicca Warrior Queen of the Iceni

This is a story about a queen.
She was not a fragile little flower
She was a tough and brave woman
The first with Girl Power

Her name was Boudicca,
She was tall and strong and loud.
She had lots of long red hair
You could spot her in a crowd.

She wore lots of colourful clothes
And a necklace made of gold.
She was a clever woman
And she was brave and bold.

Her husband the king had shared with the
Romans
All of his wealth and his land.
But when the King died
Things didn't go quite as planned



The Romans came and stole everything.
The Britons felt angry and cheated.
The Romans had also been mean and rude
And the queen and her daughters mistreated.

Queen Boudicca was furious
She had never been angrier.
She called together all of the tribes
In a place now called East Anglia.

"We can't let them get away with this!"
She said, "It isn't right.
Let's get a big army together
And give the Romans a fight!"

So all the tribes joined forces,
Led by the the red-haired Queen
In, perhaps, the biggest army
Britain had ever seen.





Eventually though the Britons lost,
The Romans were the winners.
The Romans were highly trained soldiers you
see,
And the Britons were just beginners.

Boudicca's massive army
Suffered a huge defeat
Beaten by the Roman Army
At the Battle of Watling Street.

Yes Boudicca lost in the end,
The Romans won, it's true,
But Boudicca had scared them
And taught them a thing or two.

Yes they had learned their lesson,
They were sorry they had been mean
To the Britons, and the princesses,
And the mighty Warrior Queen.

A poem for kids by Jon Bratton and Paul Perro
www.historyforkids.com

Literacy Possibilities –

A job advert for a Roman soldier

An estate agents description of a Roman Villa

A set of instructions for building a Roman road

Analyse a one of the Vindolanda letters

Recount of a battle e.g. with Iceni/Boudicca

Minutes of a meeting with Local tribe elder

Description of Boudicca

Labelling a Roman sandal or Fort

Historical fiction based on 'The Sandal'

Poem – Boudicca Warrior Queen of the Iceni www.historyforkids.com –
Jon Bratton and Paul Perro

Examine a local map – analyse place names linked to the Romans